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Impact of Group Leadership Styles on the Performance Variation in Youth Groups Projects in Uasin Gishu County

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Abstract

The Youth Enterprise Development Fund, introduced on December 8, 2006, and later established as a State Corporation on May 11, 2007, was a strategic policy initiative aimed at fostering youth employment, economic empowerment, and local development in Kenya. This study addresses the observed disparity in performance among youth group projects, despite substantial funding and support from the central government. Specifically, the research seeks to determine whether the variation in project performance among different youth groups in Kenya, with a focus on Uasin Gishu County, is attributable to the quality of leadership practices employed by group leaders during the establishment, management, and implementation of these projects. The study identifies the leadership practices and management strategies in use, examines the roles and impacts of group leaders, and explores the relationship between leadership practices and management strategies with respect to the differences in project performance. Additionally, it assesses the challenges faced by group leaders in managing change. The study utilizes perception as a parameter for measuring leadership, guided by Burns' (1978) Transformational Leadership Theory. A descriptive cross-sectional survey research design was employed, utilizing both simple random and purposive sampling techniques. A total of 241 registered youth groups were considered, with 10% (23 groups) selected through simple random sampling across Uasin Gishu County. Four members from each selected group were sampled, resulting in 92 respondents. Additionally, 6 stakeholders were purposively sampled for interviews. Data collection involved the administration of questionnaires, interviews, and two Focus Group Discussions for primary qualitative data, alongside the use of secondary data. The findings are presented through frequency distribution tables, mean values, and standard deviations, followed by detailed explanations of the results. The research reveals a significant impact of leadership practices and management strategies on the performance of youth group projects. The majority

of youth group leaders in Kenya were found to exercise situational leadership, often combining task-oriented and team-based leadership styles. Leadership skills, competencies, and abilities were found to influence project performance. However, other factors beyond leadership practices also play a role in influencing group project outcomes. The study recommends that group leaders adopt adaptable, realistic, and effective leadership practices and management strategies to enhance youth group productivity and project performance through participative decision-making, group cohesion, and clear vision and goal setting. Transformational Leadership Theory is identified as a critical approach that youth group leaders in Uasin Gishu County should embrace to improve performance and achieve competitive advantage.

Keywords: *Group leadership styles, performance variations, youth group projects*

1.0. Introduction

Youth unemployment is a significant global and local concern, representing both widespread personal misfortune and a lost opportunity for critical national and global economic development. The creation of adequate employment opportunities remains one of the greatest challenges in Kenya, as well as in many other countries worldwide. According to Ouma (2002), young people represent a major human resource for development and are key drivers of social change, economic development, and technological innovation. However, they continue to face obstacles at local, national, and international levels, despite various governmental resolutions aimed at providing them with opportunities to contribute fully to nation-building and all aspects of society.

Historically, business support for young people has its roots in the early 1970s and 1980s, following urban riots and high levels of youth unemployment in certain inner-city areas in America and Europe. These events prompted governments, politicians, and the business community to consider radical actions to address the perceived problems of alienation, lack of opportunities, and decaying infrastructure (Robson, 2008). Consequently, several policy programs were established with substantial funding from both governments and corporate businesses to support enterprise development, including initiatives such as Business in the Community, the Prince's Youth Business Trust, and Shell's Livewire scheme. These initiatives, along with the government's Enterprise Allowance scheme, formed a comprehensive support program aimed at addressing high levels of youth unemployment by facilitating the transition from unemployment to self-employment. This, in turn, contributed to the creation of an enterprise culture, particularly within the most deprived regions of the United Kingdom (Coennjaerts et al., 2009). In the United States, youth empowerment occurs in various forms, such as at home, in schools, through government policymaking, and through community organizing campaigns. Similar initiatives have been launched in Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Greece, parts of the Middle East, and India.

In African countries, a variety of policy initiatives and programs have been initiated, with investment in youth being prioritized. Recognizing the need to ensure that youths are not marginalized, many African countries have developed localized youth development programs to ensure that young people are well-represented socially and economically. In Nigeria, youth empowerment has been pursued through the provision of credit facilities known as "seed money" and the establishment of training facilities where youth are engaged in petty trade, artisanship, peasant farming, and on-the-job training in various aspects of industrial management (Rosemary, 2010). In South Africa, the Department of Trade and Industry has been instrumental in the

government's efforts to focus on entrepreneurship development and the promotion of self-employment as strategies to overcome the unemployment problem and propel the economy to higher growth rates (DTI, 2000). Other African countries have developed specific youth development programs tailored to their societal and economic needs. For example, Egypt, Uganda, Namibia, Tanzania, and Ghana have established specialized ministries responsible for ensuring youth participation in society and the economy.

In Kenya, successive government administrations over the past four decades have recognized the problems of unemployment and underemployment and have prioritized employment creation as a core policy objective (GoK, 2008). In recent years, policies aimed at employment creation have increasingly focused on youth. Notable initiatives in this regard include the Sector Plan for Labour, Youth and Human Resource Development Sector, the Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) program, the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, and the UWEZO Fund. The KKV program, launched in April 2009, aimed to employ between 200,000 and 300,000 young people annually in rural and urban areas through labor-intensive public works projects implemented by various government ministries (Njonjo, 2010).

Evidence from previous analyses has shown that inaction on the challenges affecting youth could escalate the social and economic costs of development in Kenya. Youth unemployment has become a matter of serious policy concern in the country, as the secondary negative effects of unemployment have led to other challenges, including the erosion of social values, increased crime, prostitution, drug and substance abuse, vulnerability to HIV, and poverty (Ouma, 2002).

Given Kenya's experience, it has been estimated that the country needs to create over 500,000 new jobs annually to achieve the Medium Term Plan (MTP) of Vision 2030 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The World Bank's Country Social Analysis (2007) found that youth unemployment, particularly among males, is a major contributor to frustration and tension, especially in urban areas. Article 55 of the Constitution of Kenya mandates the government to take measures, including affirmative action programs, to ensure the participation of youth in all spheres of life, including access to economic opportunities, education, employment, and other social opportunities (GoK, 2010).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Some youth groups in Kenya are performing well, while others struggle despite substantial government funding through initiatives like the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) and the Uwezo Fund. According to the Youth Enterprise Development Fund Status Report (2011), the YEDF has financed over 157,000

youth groups and enterprises with a total of KSh 5.9 billion since its inception, and has trained over two million young people in enterprise and business development. Additionally, the government allocated KSh 6 billion to the Uwezo Fund in the 2013/2014 budget to further support youth entrepreneurship. More recently, the Hustler Fund was introduced to provide accessible credit to small-scale traders, including the youth, as part of the government's broader effort to stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty.

Despite these substantial investments, youth unemployment, underemployment, and poverty remain pervasive problems in Kenya. Many young people continue to leave school, colleges, and universities without securing jobs or alternative gainful business engagements. The establishment of funds like YEDF and the Hustler Fund was intended to provide significant business and employment opportunities for the youth, contributing to economic growth, poverty reduction, and employment creation. These initiatives were also expected to facilitate economic transformation and the creation of a more equitable society.

However, despite these projections, economic difficulties have quickly translated into social challenges, as indicated in the National Youth Policy (2007). The perceived dysfunction of many youth group projects, primarily due to low net income and poor returns on investment, has exacerbated social issues such as the erosion of social institutions, increased deviance, violent crime, and heightened ethnic polarization (Kenya National Youth Charter, 2013). Prior research has explored various factors influencing the growth and decline of YEDF projects, but little attention has been paid to the specific effects of group leadership practices on youth group project performance. Statistics indicate that three out of five youth group business projects fail within their first few months of operation (National Statistics Bureau, 2007). Therefore, this study seeks to understand the relationship between leadership practices and youth group project performance, providing insights into how successful youth groups in Uasin Gishu County differ from those that struggle.

1.2. Objective

To assess the influence of various group styles on the performance variations observed in youth group projects within the context of Uasin Gishu County.

Research question

How do different group leadership styles contribute to the performance variations observed in youth group projects in Uasin Gishu County?

2.0. Literature review

2.1.1. Leadership Roles

According to Minzberg (1993), leadership roles can be categorized into three primary types: interpersonal, informational, and decisional.

Interpersonal Roles: These roles are derived from the formal authority of a leader and involve interactions with employees. They can be divided into three sub-roles:

- **Figurehead Role:** The leader acts as the symbolic representative of the organization.
- **Leader Role:** The leader uses influence to motivate followers and foster their development.

- **Liaison Role:** The leader engages with individuals inside and outside the organization to gather information beneficial to employees.

Informational Roles: Leaders spend time acquiring and disseminating information. As monitors, they continually scan their environment and followers, and as disseminators, they share the information with their team and external stakeholders.

Decisional Roles: In these roles, leaders are responsible for making decisions. This includes the entrepreneurial role, where leaders initiate and develop projects, the resource allocator role, where they decide on the distribution of resources, and the negotiator role, where they engage in negotiations with employees, superiors, and external parties regarding employee welfare.

2.1.2. Leadership Behaviors and Development of Leadership Style and Skills

Leadership effectiveness is strongly linked to leadership behaviors, styles, and the development of leadership skills. Gangel (1997) argues that leadership is not merely about possessing skills but also about the behavior and style of the leader. The increasing emphasis on ethics, corporate responsibility, and personal integrity highlights the need for leaders to adhere to the principles of the Triple Bottom Line—profit, people, and planet.

Murphy (2005) describes successful leaders as team builders who rally people towards a common goal. Leadership, according to Hughes et al. (2006), involves making choices between competing values and facing dilemmas with a commitment to what is right rather than what is expedient. Leaders must set a moral example, as their actions and values influence their followers.

Burns (1978) emphasizes the importance of good character and the moral dimension of leadership, arguing that true leadership is based on trust, which is built through vision, empathy, consistency, and integrity. Goleman (2000) further argues that values play a central role in leadership, influencing decisions and behaviors, and that value-based leadership is crucial for sustaining high performance in organizations.

Burns (1978) also notes that moral leadership is rooted in the fundamental wants, needs, and values of followers. Value-based leaders address the underlying needs of their followers, which may not always be explicitly stated. O'Toole (1996) adds that value-based leaders inspire hope in their followers by revealing their better side and demonstrating integrity through consistent moral behavior.

Hogan and Curphy (2004) suggest that leaders who maintain strong values are more likely to face tension and conflict but also have a broader perspective in problem-solving. Effective leadership requires both principled and pragmatic approaches, balancing moral rightness with strategic objectives.

Hughes et al. (2006) highlight the significance of values in the leadership process, noting that leaders and followers are motivated by values that align with their beliefs. They argue that leadership involves making difficult decisions that often involve conflicting values. Effective leaders guide their organizations through these challenges by upholding their principles and fostering a culture of trust and shared purpose.

2.2. Duties of Leaders in Organizational Sustenance

Communication is a central aspect of leadership, as emphasized by Nohria (1992). Effective leaders are skilled in rhetoric and know

how to convey complex ideas in a way that is accessible to their audience. They also understand the importance of listening and being open to feedback. Kotter (2001) stresses the importance of knowing the audience and positioning messages in a way that resonates with them.

Great leaders, according to Nohria (1992), are pragmatists who can deal with difficult realities while maintaining optimism and courage. Dubrin (1998) concurs, noting that leaders must confront hard truths and communicate them effectively to their teams. Kotter (2001) underscores the potential of facing problems head-on, as it can inspire people to take action and improve the situation.

2.3 Leadership Practices and Differences in Performance

Leadership involves enlisting the support of others to accomplish a common task, as described by Chemers (2000). Early research into leadership theory focused on personality traits and behaviors, but this approach proved inadequate due to the complex nature of leadership. Instead, leadership effectiveness is better understood through the interaction between situational contingencies and leadership traits.

Empowerment is a key leadership practice that allows followers to take initiative and feel ownership of their work. Empowered

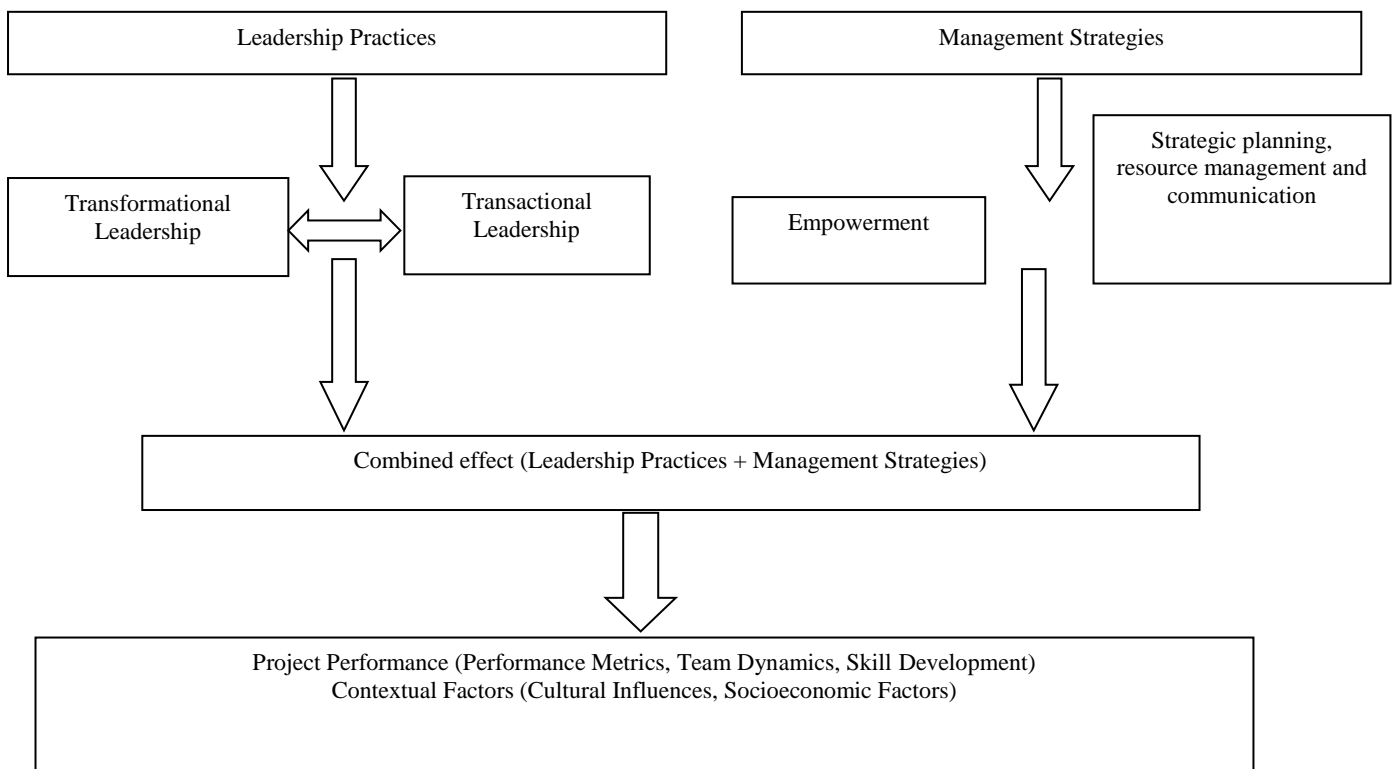
followers are more committed to their organization and have greater trust in their leaders, which positively impacts their job outcomes (Avolio, 2004).

Shared values are also crucial in leadership, as they provide a common vision and sense of purpose. A leadership style that focuses on empowering followers and promoting shared values leads to a more effective and efficient organization (Rajotte, 1996). Empowerment involves sharing power with subordinates, which increases their knowledge, fulfillment, and self-direction, leading to goal attainment for the organization (McConnell, 1995).

Effective leadership is also about building confidence in followers and creating an environment that fosters positive interactions and high standards. Leaders who believe in their followers can create winning teams and organizations, even in the face of daunting challenges (Glosing & Mintzberg, 2001). A culture of confidence, clear values, and a defined infrastructure are essential components of successful leadership. Therefore, effective leadership practices, such as empowerment, value-based decision-making and strategic communication, contribute to the successful performance of group projects and organizations.

Figure 2.4 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework outlines the relationship between leadership practices, management strategies, and the performance of youth group projects in Kenya. This framework integrates theories of leadership and management with practical insights into how these factors impact project outcomes.



(Authors, 2024)

2.4.1. Components of the Framework

2.4.1.1. Leadership Practices

Transformational Leadership: Emphasizes inspiring and motivating team members to exceed expectations and embrace change (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Key components include vision, charisma, and individualized consideration. **Transactional Leadership:** Focuses on structured tasks, rewards, and penalties to achieve short-term goals (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Key components include contingent

rewards and management by exception. **Empowerment:** Involves delegating authority and encouraging team members to take ownership of their work (Chapman, 2002; Luis, 2008).

2.4.1.2. Management Strategies

Strategic Planning: The process of defining goals, setting priorities, and allocating resources to achieve project objectives (Kotter, 1996). Includes setting clear objectives and action plans. **Resource Management:** Effective allocation and utilization of resources

(time, finances, and human capital) to ensure project success (Mullins, 2006). Communication: Ensuring open and effective communication channels within the team (Nohria, 1992). Includes feedback mechanisms and regular updates.

2.4.2. Youth Group Project Performance

Performance Metrics: Measures of project success including completion rates, quality of deliverables, and stakeholder satisfaction (Hughes et al., 2024). Team Dynamics: The interaction and collaboration among team members, influenced by leadership and management practices (Chemers, 2000). Skill Development: The enhancement of individual and group skills as a result of the project experience (Rath & Clifton, 2004).

2.4.3. Relationships

Leadership Practices → Project Performance: Transformational and transactional leadership practices impact team motivation, efficiency, and overall project outcomes. Empowerment can enhance team members' ownership and accountability, leading to improved performance.

Management Strategies → Project Performance: Effective strategic planning and resource management contribute to better project execution and results. Good communication ensures alignment and resolves conflicts, enhancing project success.

Leadership Practices + Management Strategies → Project Performance: A combination of effective leadership and sound management strategies is expected to synergistically improve project performance by fostering a supportive environment and efficient processes.

2.4.4. Contextual Factors

Cultural Influences: In the Kenyan context, cultural norms and values may affect leadership and management practices. Understanding these cultural aspects is crucial for effective project implementation (Goleman, 2000; Chemers, 2000). Socioeconomic Factors: Economic conditions and access to resources in Uasin Gishu County may influence the availability of resources and the overall effectiveness of management strategies (Burns, 2008).

3.0. Research methodology

3.1. Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design, targeting all individuals in registered youth groups across Uasin Gishu County as the unit of analysis. Kothari (2004) defines cross-sectional research as the collection of data from a specific population at a single point in time, followed by its organization and tabulation. For this study, the population was drawn from all six sub-counties within the county: Turbo, with a total of six wards; Kesses, with four wards; Moiben, with five wards; Kapseret, with five wards; Ainabkoi; and Soy, with a total of seven wards. The cross-sectional design was chosen due to its ability to minimize bias and enhance reliability in the study's findings.

In addition to the cross-sectional design, a descriptive survey design was also utilized. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), referencing Gay, note that descriptive studies are effective in accurately portraying the characteristics, events, or situations within a population, providing insights into current conditions and attitudes. This design was particularly suitable for the study as it aimed to identify and describe the leadership practices and management strategies employed by group leaders within the study population. By incorporating both cross-sectional and descriptive survey designs, the study was able to comprehensively explore

leadership practices and management strategies, yielding both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis.

3.2. Sample size and Sampling Techniques

The target population for this study comprised all youth members affiliated with registered youth groups in Uasin Gishu County. According to records from the Department of Social and Cultural Services, 241 youth groups were registered across the six sub-counties at the time the research was conducted. It is recommended that each youth group consist of at least 12 members, resulting in an estimated total of 2,892 youths involved in the study.

The sample size was determined following the guidance of Saunders et al. (2007), who argue that well-chosen samples comprising about 10% of the population can often provide reliable results in descriptive studies. They note that if the population elements are homogenous, a smaller sample size may suffice to accurately reflect the characteristics of interest. Consequently, the researcher selected 23 youth groups, representing 10.04% of the total registered groups, using simple random sampling as a representative sample.

Oso (2009) suggests that in studies involving teams and groups, sampling at least one-third of the population is advisable to achieve greater precision and ensure the representativeness of the sample. In line with this recommendation, at least four members from each of the 23 youth groups were selected using simple random sampling, resulting in a total sample size of 92 respondents for the study.

3.3. Instrumentation

The study employed both questionnaires and interviews to collect data from the targeted respondents. Preliminary arrangements were made, and appointments were scheduled with each of the 23 youth groups. After receiving a briefing from the researcher, four sampled respondents in each youth group completed the self-administered questionnaires, which were collected immediately afterward. Data collection from each youth group was conducted on different appointment days, coinciding with their regular group meetings. A total of 92 questionnaires were distributed, all of which were completed and returned to the researcher during data collection.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were organized and conducted on separate days, based on the participants' availability. The first FGD included 7 participants, while the second involved 5 participants.

Borg and Gall (2003) note that data collected through interviews can be time-consuming to analyze and typically involve a smaller number of participants compared to surveys. Despite these limitations, interviews were deemed appropriate for this research as they provided valuable insights into the perceptions of group leadership practices among youth group members and other stakeholders in Uasin Gishu County. Additionally, each item in the questionnaire was specifically developed to address the study's objectives and research questions. Burns (1999) highlights that the quantitative method is suitable for obtaining objective results, making it a fitting approach for this study.

3.4. Data Analysis

Before processing the responses, the completed questionnaires were carefully edited for completeness and consistency. The data was then coded to enable the categorization of responses into various groups. The collected data was analyzed both qualitatively

and quantitatively. Qualitative analysis focused on information gathered through interviews and focus group discussions, providing a deeper understanding of the subject matter. On the other hand, quantitative analysis employed descriptive statistical techniques, including the calculation of frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentiles. These analyses were performed using statistical tools such as Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Descriptive statistics were crucial in meaningfully describing the distribution of scores through numerical summaries, while qualitative analysis offered additional insights into the findings. As Cooper and Schindler (2008) suggest, content analysis is instrumental in highlighting issues that might not be captured through structured questions alone.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

The researcher provided a comprehensive explanation of the study's purpose to the respondents and sought their voluntary participation and informed consent. The nature and objectives of the research were clearly communicated, ensuring that respondents understood their involvement. The researcher respected the respondents' rights to maintain their personal integrity, anonymity, and confidentiality, as well as their ability to withdraw from the study at any time. To uphold these ethical standards, identifying information such as names and addresses were omitted from the questionnaires and replaced with identification numbers, as recommended by Babbie and Mouton (2001). All completed

questionnaires were coded, and respondents' names were not used to ensure anonymity.

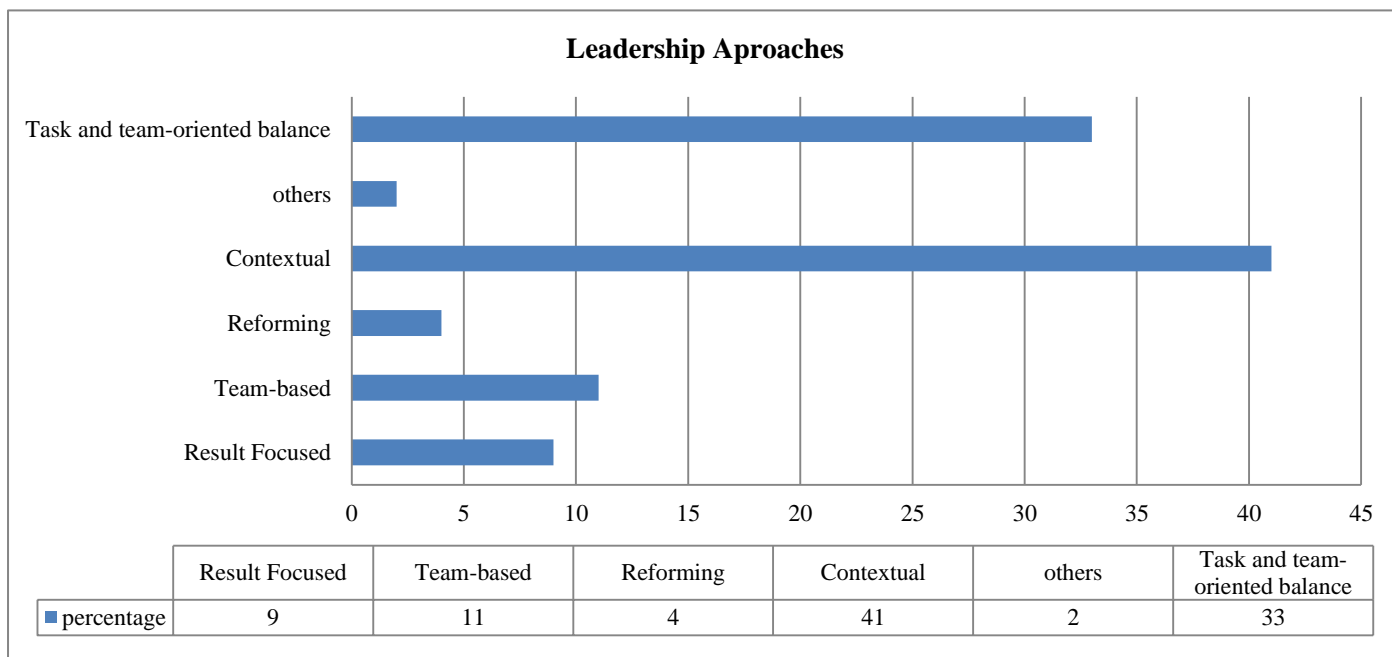
Participants were assured that the data collected would be used solely for the research's stated purposes and that no unauthorized person would have access to the research data, in accordance with the guidelines provided by Bless and Higson-Smith (2000). Confidentiality was maintained by ensuring that while the data could potentially identify respondents, such identification would not be disclosed publicly. The study successfully navigated key ethical issues, particularly the protection of respondents' privacy and confidentiality. All information gathered was treated with the utmost confidence, and the views of respondents were respected regardless of their nature. The researcher ensured that responses were not used for any purpose other than the study. The results of the research will be shared with relevant authorities and made available to any participants who express interest in the findings.

4.0. Results and Discussions

4.1.1. Leadership Practices for Success

Leadership styles are very important as far as implementation of youth group vision, goals and objectives and subsequently project performance, according to Cole (2004). This objective was measured by looking at six group leadership styles in order to identify the leadership practices and management strategies used and subsequently, the impact of these leadership styles in performance of group projects. The data collected is presented in figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Leadership Approaches



(Authors, 2024)

The effective leadership of any organization is a complex undertaking that requires a delicate balance of various approaches. While there are numerous leadership styles and theories, a recent survey suggests that a combination of task-oriented and team-based approaches is the most prevalent among successful leaders. This study delves into the key findings of the survey and discusses the implications for effective leadership practices.

The survey revealed that the most preferred leadership approach is a contextual one, with 41% of respondents identifying it as their preferred style. This indicates that effective leaders are able to adapt their leadership style to fit the specific demands of the situation. Such leaders are not bound by rigid frameworks but are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of their organization and its members. The preference for contextual leadership identified by 41% of respondents resonates with the principles of situational leadership theory, as proposed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969). This theory emphasizes the importance of leaders adapting their style based on the maturity and competence of their

followers, as well as the demands of the situation. Dubrin (1998) further supports this, arguing that effective leaders are those who can flexibly adjust their behavior in response to situational variables. This adaptability is crucial in dynamic environments where rigid adherence to a single leadership style may not yield the best outcomes. Similarly, Yukl (2013) points out that leaders who are able to modify their approach depending on the situational context tend to be more successful because they can better address the needs of their team and the challenges of the environment.

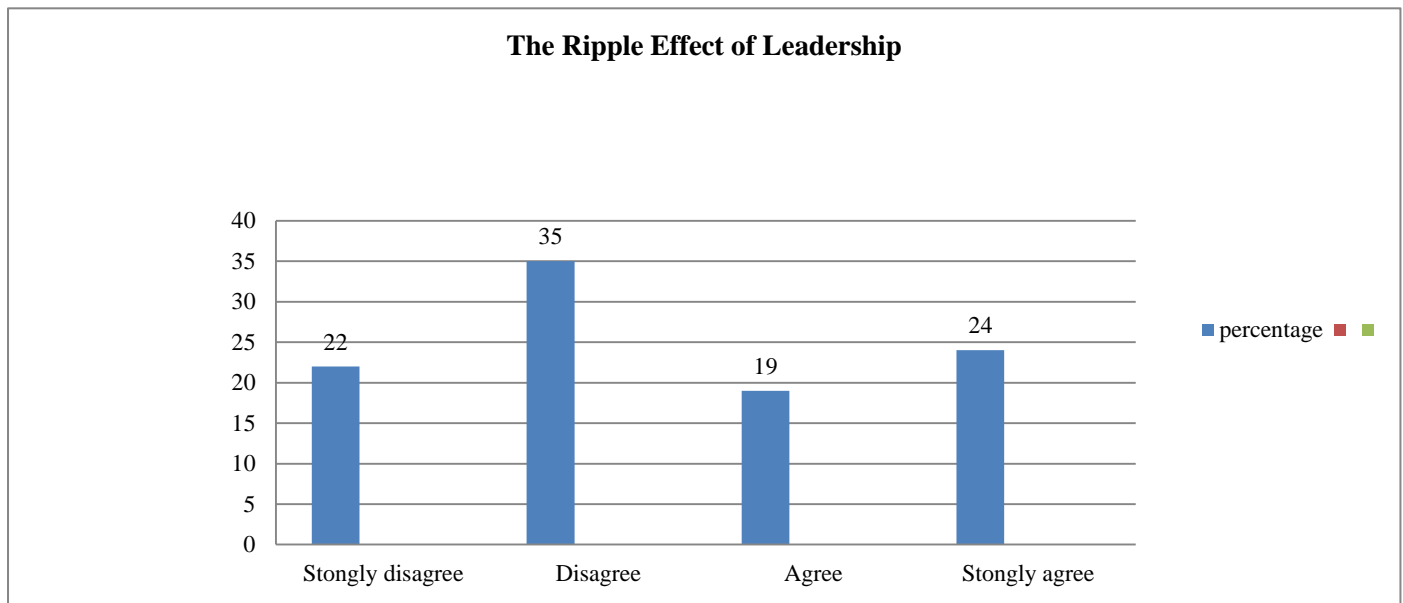
The second most popular approach was a task and team-oriented balance, with 33% of respondents choosing this option. This suggests that successful leaders are able to effectively manage tasks while fostering a collaborative and supportive environment for their teams. They understand the importance of both goal achievement and team cohesion, and they are able to strike a balance between these two critical elements. This approach aligns with the managerial grid model developed by Blake and Mouton (1964), which advocates for a balance between concern for people and concern for production. Leaders who can balance these two elements are often able to foster both high performance and strong team cohesion. Research by Hackman and Wageman (2005) supports the idea that effective team leadership involves not only managing tasks but also maintaining a supportive and collaborative team environment. This dual focus on tasks and relationships is seen as essential for achieving sustained team success.

The presence of other leadership styles, such as result-focused and reforming approaches, albeit less prevalent, is consistent with the idea that no single leadership style is universally effective. Different contexts and teams may require different approaches, as suggested by contingency theories of leadership (Fiedler, 1967). This diversity in leadership styles also aligns with Goleman's (2000) research on emotional intelligence and leadership, which suggests that leaders who can draw from a variety of leadership styles and apply them appropriately in different situations are more likely to be successful. *"Developing and transforming other group members is just as important as financial responsibilities like repaying loans and making profits,"* one of the group leader emphasized.

4.1. The Ripple Effect of Leadership

The respondents were then asked if the leadership styles used by their group leaders are effective or not in goal attainment. Likert scale for answering where 1= strongly disagreed, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4= strongly agree as shown in figure below.

Figure 3 The Ripple Effect of Leadership



(Authors, 2024).

In relation to the role and impact of leadership styles as leading to goal realization in youth groups, 22% of the respondents strongly disagree while 35% disagreed respectively while 19% and 24% of the respondents agree and strongly agree respectively that leadership styles and practices impact on goal attainment. Thus, the majority of respondents in this study perceive leadership's influence positively, which is echoed in the literature. Avolio and Yammarino (2013) argue that positive leadership behaviors, particularly those aligned with transformational leadership, tend to generate a positive work environment, improve employee morale, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. This perception aligns with Goleman (2000), who notes that emotionally intelligent leaders can create a positive organizational climate, which in turn boosts performance and employee satisfaction. The "ripple effect"

of such leadership is seen in enhanced team dynamics, higher motivation, and improved overall organizational outcomes.

The variation in responses, with a minority of respondents disagreeing with the positive influence of leadership, aligns with research acknowledging that leadership impact can be perceived differently depending on individual experiences and context. Fiedler's Contingency Model (1967) suggests that the effectiveness of leadership styles is contingent on situational factors, meaning that the same leadership behavior may be perceived differently by individuals depending on their role, personality, or the specific challenges they face. Additionally, House's Path-Goal Theory (1971) posits that leadership effectiveness is influenced by the leader's ability to meet followers' needs and the context in which leadership is exercised, which can vary significantly across different settings.

Leadership's far-reaching impact, often described as a "ripple effect," is well-documented in leadership studies. Kouzes and Posner (2003), in their work on exemplary leadership practices, discuss how leaders influence not only their immediate team but also the broader organization and even external stakeholders. They highlight that effective leadership behaviors can inspire others to adopt similar behaviors, creating a cascading effect throughout the organization. Additionally, Bass (1990) in his transformational leadership theory emphasizes that leaders can inspire followers to transcend their self-interests for the good of the group, leading to a broader impact on organizational culture and performance.

5.0. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Leadership Practices for Success

On the basis of the foregoing results concerning leadership approaches used by group leaders as shown in the study, it is concluded that the leadership style that is most popular in Nandi Youth Groups is the situational style of leadership as indicated by 41% of respondents stated that their group leaders adopted situational leadership style followed by a combination of task-oriented and team based leadership style and participative/team based leadership style as stated by 33% and 11% of the respondents respectively. It is also established that these leadership styles had negative outcomes on group project performances because in essence, group leaders are particular about getting results and only encourage other group members to give their best to increase productivity. Only 4% of the group leaders practice transformational kind of leadership.

5.2. The Ripple Effect of Leadership

The second conclusion from the findings is that leadership practices/ styles have an impact on group project performances; many respondents have negative attitude on how group leaders apply their practices and strategies especially on control of resources through budgeting, poor planning, direction setting and organization as clarified by respondents interviewed. This conclusion may explain why some programs and projects failed; others were uncompleted and others did not meet specific objectives. Positive effects were defined by the group members' level of satisfaction, motivation, growth and the achievement of organizational goals.

5.3. Limitation and recommendation for Further Research

This study was primarily descriptive, focusing on leadership practices and management strategies within the context of youth groups in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. While the findings provide valuable insights, there are several limitations that suggest areas for further research.

Limitations: The study was confined to Uasin Gishu County, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions in Kenya. The sample size, while adequate for this study, was relatively small and may not fully capture the diversity of experiences and perspectives across different counties. Additionally, the descriptive nature of the study, while useful for exploring the current state of leadership practices and management strategies, does not allow for deeper causal analysis.

Recommendations for Further Research: Future research should consider expanding the scope beyond Uasin Gishu County to include other counties in Kenya. A larger and more diverse sample would provide a more comprehensive understanding of leadership practices and management strategies across different regions.

Comparative studies between counties would also be valuable to determine whether the effects of group leadership are consistent across various contexts in Kenya.

Moreover, there is a need for studies employing different methodologies, such as longitudinal or experimental designs, to explore the causal relationships between leadership practices, management strategies, and youth group performance. These approaches could provide deeper insights into the dynamics of leadership within youth groups and offer more robust evidence to inform policy and practice.

By addressing these limitations and pursuing the recommended avenues for further research, scholars can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of leadership and management in youth groups across Kenya.

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